

## **REGULAR MEETING OF THE JASPER COUNTY COUNCIL AUGUST 15, 2017**

The Jasper County Council met this date at 7:00 P.M. C.S.T. in the Commissioners Room, Suite 202, of the Jasper County Courthouse located at 115 West Washington Street, Rensselaer, Indiana, with the following members present: Rein Bontreger, Stephen Jordan, Gerrit H. DeVries, Andrew Andree, Gary Fritts, Paul Norwine and Brett Risner. Also present was Auditor Kimberly K. Grow and Deputy Auditor Tina Porter. Mr. Bontreger called the meeting to order and those present stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance led by Mr. Norwine.

MINUTES: Mr. Andree stated that the minutes do not reflect that he was in attendance. Mr. Jordan made a motion to approve, with the correction to add Mr. Andree to the first paragraph showing that he was in attendance. Mr. Risner seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

UMBAUGH: Ms. Sansone was present to give a power point presentation on the County's current financial situation as well as a projected outlook through the year 2020. The fund analysis contains sixteen funds, but only focuses on eight. She stated that they made assumptions in growth, assuming that property taxes are going to grow four percent. During the recent legislative session, gas taxes were increased which will provide additional funding for the County. Motor Vehicle Highway state distributions were estimated to increase thirty seven percent in 2018. Local Roads & Streets were projected to increase forty eight percent. Both increases were built in to the analysis. They've assumed a growth of two percent for all recurring expenditures. Capital Outlays are based on the Capital Improvement Plan. It was also assumed that the Riverboat and Cumulative Jail Fund will be declared dormant and the remaining fund balances will be transferred to the County General Fund. The next assumption is that the CCI Tax Levy on the fund will be eliminated and shifted to County General.

Jasper County is only losing .06 percent of property taxes to the Circuit Breaker credit, which equates to approximately \$4,200.00. This is due to the low property taxes.

She said that, as they went through the analysis, there were a couple items of concern. The primary item of concern is that the cash reserves in the County General Fund are declining. The combined balances for the operating funds as a whole are projected to decline by \$3.1 million by the end of 2017. This is assuming that the County spends all of the budgeted disbursements, but she doesn't think that happens on an annual basis. The driving force behind this is that the County's expenses are outpacing revenues. The graph in the handout she presented the Council with shows declining cash reserves as well as a detail of projected decline in cash reserves. With no additional revenues and no budget reductions, there will be a steady decline in cash reserves.

The next area of concern is that the budgets seem to be high and are not aligned with historical spending. She said that it appears the County is approving budgets that will not get fully utilized. Also concerning are the structural budget deficits.

She explained that there are some revenue options available to the County. The Local Income Tax Rate could be increased by .636 which could generate an additional \$2.8 million. If the County were to adopt a Wheel Tax it would generate an additional \$2.1 million; however, it can only be used for roads, but in turn would free up money in other areas. The County also has the ability to re-establish the Cumulative Capital Development Fund rate up to the maximum of .0333, which would generate about \$332,000.00. If the County only wanted to generate \$1.4 million, a Certified Shares Local Income Tax half of what the maximum is could be generated. A Public Safety Local Income Tax or Economic Development Local Income Tax could be generated in the amount of .25. Public Safety is restricted to Public Safety purposes, but Economic Development can be used for anything. She said that Certified Shares is the best one to adopt due to the flexibility.

She said that fees for services and charges should be reviewed very year or every other year to make sure they are sufficient enough to provide those services. This is most common in the Health Department. The Health Department should be as self-sufficient as possible and less reliant on property taxes. The property tax revenue that the Health Department doesn't use can be shifted to the County General Fund. The Rainy Day Fund can be used for non-recurring expenditures. The County also has the option of shifting or restructuring the Local Income Tax Rate.

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Without changing the overall Local Income Tax rate, the County could shift .1 percent away from Certified Shares to Economic Development or Public Safety. This would generate approximately \$120,000.00, but in turn, libraries and townships would get less.

Mr. Bontreger asked if it's possible to combine townships. Ms. Sansone replied that it is possible under the Government Consolidation Statute. She's seen municipalities consolidating with adjoining townships. Townships can also combine and consolidate.

On the handout, she explained the graph showing the comparisons between the receipts and disbursements. Ideally, she said the bars should be equal which would mean the County has a balanced budget. The minimum ending cash balance should be equal to fifteen percent of the budgeted disbursements although they would like to see it closer to twenty five to thirty percent.

In the Reassessment Fund, there are enough cash reserves that the County could switch the levy over to County General for a couple years and then switch it back to Reassessment.

The LIT Public Safety Fund will fluctuate because it's tied to the economy, but for the most part will stay fairly steady. The cash balance is well above the minimum.

In the Emergency Medical Services Fund, the expenses are equaling the revenues. By the year 2020, the County may have to start using cash reserves. This fund is based on a contractual agreement. She said the balance has been below the recommended minimum.

In the Health Department Fund, many counties will shift the levy back and forth to and from County General, depending on the need. The need in this fund appears to be around \$325,000 to \$330,000. She said Umbaugh projected that the County would shift more property taxes to this fund, but it would be helpful to review the fees that the Health Department collects so they are less reliant on property taxes.

For Motor Vehicle Highway, the expenditures are higher due to road projects. The balance is above the cash reserve requirement. If the expenses were to continue year after year like they have been in 2017, Ms. Sansone said that it would be a problem. The growth in receipts from the State is from the increase in gas tax. She advised that this fund should be watched in order to keep the balance from dropping below the fifteen percent minimum, which would be \$150,000.00.

In the Local Road & Streets Fund, because of the legislative changes, the growth in the receipts are from the increase in the gas tax. This fund is also above the recommended reserves.

The receipts in the Statewide 911 Fund come directly from the State. The County receives approximately \$505,000.00 without much of an increase so the budget should be kept around that amount. Cash reserves in this fund have also been above the minimum.

In closing, Ms. Sansone stated that this information should help with budgeting at least for the next three years since Umbaugh has projected the revenue for the County through the year 2020.

Mr. Norwine asked if the findings took in to account new housing starts. Ms. Sansone replied that, since they did a circuit breaker analysis, they've worked with a company that's tried to project based on what's happened in the past and what they know today. A lot of new housing starts will increase the assessed value and possibly decrease the tax rate. This will not create additional revenue.

Mr. Fritts asked how the property taxes are a known number. Ms. Sansone replied that the State certifies the number in June.

Mr. Norwine stated that he heard that Umbaugh projected how to cover costs through increased taxes. He then asked if, when analyzing, are there other options such as frozen or decreased costs? Ms. Sansone replied that there are two options, either increase revenue or reduce expenditures. The next step would be to analyze the actual disbursements and pair it with the budget to see if there are areas that could be reduced.

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It would be a good idea to do this before increasing taxes. She said that Umbaugh was looking at options for increasing revenues and bridging a funding deficit. As they investigated further, she said it looks like there are areas that could easily be cut from the budget.

Mr. Bontreger explained that the practice of sending high budget requests started when the County lowered the levy. It was then frozen and the County was not able to increase it. He said that the County is going to try and take Umbaugh's advice and submit a more accurate budget.

Mr. Jordan stated that the Local Option Income Tax runs two years behind. He asked if we have knowledge of how much is coming back and if so, do the figures reflect that? Ms. Sansone replied that they don't know what the figures are. It has flat-lined for 2017, but should be trending up for 2018. He then asked if we know when there will be disbursements out of the Stabilization Fund. She replied that the County can request a report from the Department of Revenue that will have that information. Mr. Bontreger asked if we have the ability to adjust the rate at which the fund accumulates. She stated that the statute requires that the rate stay at fifteen percent. Once it goes over fifteen percent, the State triggers a distribution and there are stipulations on how it can be used.

Mr. DeVries stated that the Council tends to easily approve additional appropriations. When he first became a Councilman, he would ask if there was enough money to cover the request and was told that there was, so he said he stopped asking. He said there is a need for a checks and balances system to make sure there is enough money to cover the request. Ms. Sansone replied that what Mr. DeVries brought up is a valid point. She said the Council can use the information from Umbaugh since it shows the ending cash balances. A good thing to consider at budget time is how much cash reserves the County wants to have at the end of the year. She also stated that when DLGF approves a budget, they don't care if there is any money left at the end of the year. She reiterated how important it is to keep at least fifteen percent of expenses in each fund.

Ms. Sansone informed the Council that Ms. Reed is working on a cash balance policy and a debt management policy. She believes Ms. Reed would like to meet with one person from both the Council and Board of Commissioners and the Auditor to discuss the policies.

Mr. Fritts stated that the County as a whole is pretty healthy with decent cash reserves and options, to which Ms. Sansone agreed.

**RESOLUTIONS:** Mr. Bontreger stated that the Council has two resolutions to consider, although they will not be acting on them tonight. He read them aloud. The first one is to declare the Riverboat Fund dormant. The remaining balance is believed to be \$1.3 million with exact numbers to be available at the next meeting. It will be rolled in to County General. The fund brings in approximately \$120,000.00 per year that would accumulate in County General if this fund is declared dormant. The second resolution is to declare the Cumulative Jail Fund dormant. The remaining balance is believed to be \$269,000 which would be rolled in to County General. This fund has no yearly income. Mr. Bontreger stated that this is strictly a short-term solution and will be voted on at September's meeting.

**TRANSFER REQUEST / VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE:** A request has been made by Patrick Donnelly, Veterans Service Officer, to transfer \$100.00 from Travel to Office Supplies within the County General Fund, Veterans Service Office Budget. Mr. Fritts made a motion to approve the transfer as requested. Mr. Norwine seconded and the motion carried.

**ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS / HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT:** Advertised in the Motor Vehicle Highway Fund, Highway – Maintenance & Repair, Bituminous (Mixed Aggrg) was \$900,000.00. Mr. Norwine asked if the funds are available. Mr. Bontreger replied that they are and it's reflected in the report that Mr. Haberlin brought. Mr. Risner made a motion to approve **Additional Appropriation Ordinance No. 2017-08A** as advertised. Mr. Fritts seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

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**ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION / HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT:** Advertised in the Motor Vehicle Highway Fund, Highway – Maintenance & Repair, Stone, Gravel & Other was \$200,000.00. Mr. Norwine made a motion to approve **Additional Appropriation Ordinance No. 2017-08B** as advertised. Mr. Andree seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

**ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION / PROSECUTING ATTORNEY:** Advertised in the County General Fund, Prosecuting Attorney, Personal Services, Part-time was \$5,000.00. After some discussion with Mrs. Haskell and Auditor Grow, it was determined that this can be handled as a transfer. Mrs. Haskell withdrew her request for an additional appropriation.

**GROWTH FACTOR ORDINANCE:** Mr. Bontreger stated that we are a “thawed” county because years ago the Council decided to apply the growth factor to property taxes.

**BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING:** Mr. Bontreger stated that he will be reading the budget notice which can also be found online [www.budgetnotices.in.gov](http://www.budgetnotices.in.gov).

Estimated Civil Max Levy	\$6,928,403.00
Property Tax Cap Credit Estimate	\$3,759.00
County General	\$14,383,622.00
Reassessment	\$356,655.00
Local Income Tax	\$1,575,400.00
Highway	\$8,436,438.00
Local Road & Street	\$1,000,000.00
Cumulative Bridge	\$1,000,000.00
Health	\$346,945.00
Emergency Ambulance / Med	
Services – Fire	\$751,697.00
Cumulative Capital Imp	\$1,500,000.00
Cumulative Capital Development	\$919,500.00
Clerk Rec Perp	\$11,883.00
Community Corrections Proj Inc	\$484,835.00
Extradition Services (Sup Ct)	\$20,000.00
LIT Public Safety – County Share	\$1,570,839.00
Def & Diversion Fund	\$24,176.00
Recorders Record Perpetuation	\$45,937.00
Surveyor Corner Perpetuation	\$14,000.00
Local Health Maintenance Trust	\$20,739.00
Statewide 911	\$504,366.00
Supl Adl Probation	\$139,500.00
Community Correction Work Rel	\$8,000.00
Supl Juv Prob	\$25,400.00
County User Fees	\$146,500.00
Donation Warning Sirens	\$4,000.00
Balance Innkeepers Tax Fund	\$143,000.00
Gen Local Health Maint Trust	\$33,139.00
Emer Planning / Right to Know	\$13,000.00
LOIT Special Distribution	\$2,000,000.00
Prosecutor Federal Forfeiture	\$14,500.00
Prosecutor State Drug Recovery	\$16,000.00
Donations Animal Shelter	\$4,000.00
Sales Disclosure (County Share)	\$25,000.00
LIT Co Share Econ Develop	\$1,389,160.00
Community Crossings Grant	\$1,000,000.00
Total	\$37,928,231.00

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COUNTY GENERAL BUDGET / SHERIFF: Sheriff Risner was present to provide his budget request. He opened by telling the Council that he represents seventy plus of the most dedicated employees and that his department frequently covers for the Indiana State Police. He said that they do the best they can every day, but he sees the stress the job puts on them on a daily basis. They've been short-handed for the past three years and have lost approximately \$700,000.00 retraining when a position is refilled due to an employee leaving.

He brought information on the statistics so far for 2017. There have been 8,982 calls assigned to deputies, 1,925 traffic stops, 443 crashes, 192 domestic calls and 1,210 assists to other agencies.

In the Corrections Division, as of today's date, there are 98 offenders incarcerated, down from 103 last week. There have been 144 transports out of county (130 male and 25 female) totaling 16,407 miles. There have been 684 adults and 25 juveniles transported to the Courthouse totaling 829 miles. There have been 23 adult medical transports and 24 Emergency Detention Order transports totaling 2,474 miles. These transports are throughout the state and can even be in Cook County and potentially take all day.

The calls assigned, assists to other agencies and transports are up. The population is up as well, having averaged 80 inmates in 2016.

Sheriff Risner and Ryan King played a compilation of a series of 911 calls that came in over an approximate 15 minute time period that spans from Wheatfield to south of Remington.

Mr. Bontreger acknowledged all the extra duties involved when holding the title of Sheriff and said that he appreciates all that Sheriff Risner does.

Sheriff Risner stated that the amount of \$270,770.00 for the police pension fund was given to him by the actuary and is the actual amount needed. There was an increase requested in Salaries, Compensatory Time, Overtime and Straight-Time Training. The increase in the Part-Time Secretary line is because he said he could use another person. He's also requested increases in Part-Time Security, Garage and Motors, Medical Testing, Liability Insurance, Training and Furniture and Equipment, which is for the Court Security.

JAIL BUDGET / SHERIFF: Sheriff Risner stated that he requested a salary increase for the Correctional Officers; although he did request a new Correctional Officer, which would give the ability to have a full-time transport Officer for longer distance transports. He would also like to add an additional part-time Control Officer. There is also an increase requested in Part-Time Kitchen and Straight-Time Training.

STATEWIDE 911 BUDGET / SHERIFF: Sheriff Risner stated that the Compensatory Time is used to fill in for short shifts. The E911 Coordinator was taken out of this fund and a Dispatcher was added. The Data Info and Operating Expenses were reduced due to the upgrade.

PUBLIC SAFETY BUDGET / SHERIFF: The County receives \$48,721.50 per year from the Kankakee Valley School Corporation to reimburse for the School Resource Officer, which is paid on a monthly basis throughout the school year.

Sheriff Risner said that there was some discussion last year about the facilitation of the retention of officers. When they are twenty years vested, they receive fifty percent of their pay through retirement and don't have any incentive to stay. He suggested adding an additional percentage at thirty years. He requested a ten percent salary increase to try to keep Jasper County competitive in the region. Mr. Fritts asked if he added any personnel and he replied that he did not.

LIT COUNTY SHARE / SHERIFF: There was an increase requested on Computer Supplies, Maintenance Agreement, Radio Repair and Maintenance and Telephone / Cell / Internet. The maintenance agreement amount was increased to cover the reoccurring rental charge for the 911 tower that is approximately \$25,000.00 per year.

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CUMULATIVE CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT / SHERIFF: In this fund is a request for four vehicle replacements for 2018. Under the State bid price, Fords are around \$27,000, Chargers are \$25,500 and Dodge Ram 4 X 4 trucks are around \$27,000. Its costs approximately \$5,500 to equip each vehicle with cages, lights and other necessary items except radios. With the 2017 adopted budget of \$87,000.00, Sheriff Risner was able to purchase three cars. Mr. Bontreger asked him if there was any way he could get by with three vehicles. He replied that it would put somebody in a high mileage vehicle if he doesn't replace four. Purchasing four every three to four years keeps the fleet at a controllable level on maintenance and safety. Cars that are taken off the fleet then go in to the transport services. In the past, he's budget for three cars and supplemented for a fourth car using the Asset Forfeiture Fund. The balance in that fund is currently \$47,260.00. Through the approval of the Commissioners, they will be adding an additional bay on to the motor pool shed to park the communications vehicle in.

CAGIT / SHERIFF: There are increases requested in Institutional Supplies, Jail Meals, Uniforms, Jail Repairs, Medical and Hospital, TV Cable and Utilities. Sheriff Risner stated that they will likely be short this year on the Jail Meals due to the population they've had. He stated that they are billing the Department of Corrections for all Level 6 felons that they have to hold due to House Bill 1006. Department of Corrections will only pay \$35.00 per day but the cost is closer to \$56.00 to \$58.00 per day, depending on the inmate and medication they may need. The amount has not been raised since the 1990's. The last payment received was in March. To date, they've received approximately \$25,000.00 and have approximately \$41,000.00 pending. The payments received go in to the County General Fund.

Mr. Bontreger asked Sheriff Risner if there is something specific they know of in regards to jail repairs. He replied that he was told the elevator needs replaced. They've also had some plumbing failures and currently have a broken "non-breakable" window in a cell block.

The utilities were increased because they also have to pay utilities for the tower site. The August claim has already been turned in and they have a balance of \$72,682.00. Mr. Bontreger asked if the air handling unit has been working as it's supposed to. Sheriff Risner replied that it's working better, but they continue to have control problems and can't seem to get anybody to fix it. They are currently looking for another provider. Mr. Hayes has contacted another company for a quote. He stated that the door locks are starting to show signs of failure. There are 70 doors and each lock costs approximately \$700 to \$800. They've also started to see issues with the plumbing in the showers and sinks.

Sheriff Risner was thanked and he thanked the Council for the support they've given his department over the years.

EXTENSION BUDGET / BRYAN OVERSTREET: Mr. Overstreet opened by thanking his Board and recognizing Mr. Jordan for thirty years of service to 4-H. He thanked Mr. Jordan and Mr. Norwine for their help with the fair. He stated that there has been an increase requested for the following: 5% for the Office Manager, 3% for the Secretary and Contractual Services and Maintenance and Repair in the CEDIT Fund. Mr. Fritts asked about the amount spent so far this year in the Professional Improvement and Dues line item. Mr. Overstreet replied that there are more seminars this year that it will be used for; although it might not all be spent. They have requested \$4,500.00 less in their total budget than they did in 2009.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Jordan made a motion to continue to Thursday, August 17, 2017 at 8:30 A.M. Mr. Andree seconded and the motion carried.

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Rein O. Bontreger, President

ATTEST:

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Kimberly K. Grow, Auditor of Jasper County

